

**REMARKS**

**35 U.S.C. § 102(b)**

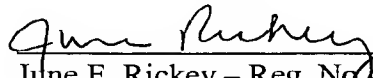
Claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 20-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Benzing (AWO/00/51810). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons. Amended claim 1 now recites that the entire strip is cut through in a single cutting step. Benzing specifically teaches a two step cutting process. In the first cutting step, the cutting element is oriented at a skive angle and cuts the strip only to a depth  $d$ , wherein  $d$  is less than the total thickness of the strip  $t$ . (Page 12, lines 14-22). The cords are not cut in this step. Then in the second cutting step, the second cutting element creates the segment by cutting between the cords. Applicant's invention accomplishes the cutting of the strip into a segment in one single step while Benzing's device teaches a two step process.

Independent claim 23 has also been amended, and now recites that the elastomeric strip is supported on an anvil, wherein the anvil has a first support surface oriented at an angle  $\theta_1$ , and a second support surface oriented at an angle  $\theta_2$  wherein the second support surface is not tangent to the first support surface forming a transition point. See Figures 5A-C. The first and second support surfaces of the anvil of Benzing are tangent, because there is a smooth transition at the interface. See Figures 5A and 5B of Benzing.

Thus as Benzing fails to anticipate the invention as recited in claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 20-31, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

In light of this amendment, all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are allowable. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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